

# WPD CUSTOMER PANEL

## 28 March 2022 Minutes

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### Attending (Customer Panel):

WB - William Baker, Energy Systems Catapult  
JG - Jo Giles, Cadent  
RH - Richard Hellen, The Schumacher Institute  
JK - Joseph Kidd – Afallen Wales  
GM - Gabby Mallett (Chair)  
BR - Bob Radford, Kirklington PC  
KR - Kate Robbins, Wessex Water  
ASp - Alex Spreadbury, B&Q  
CT - Cathy Tibbles, Whitwick Parish Council

### Attending (WPD):

AS - Alison Sleightholm  
KJ – Kester Jones  
RA - Richard Allcock  
NJ - Nicki Johnson

GM welcomed the group

### Storms Eunice and Franklin

<b>Discussion</b>	<p>AS updated the group on storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin that hit the WPD regions in February. The group discussed the benefit of analysing uprooted trees and correlation between tree failures and power cuts. AS explained helicopter units inspected trees when it was safe to do so and in time we may be able to predict faults.</p> <p>AS was asked about accidents or lost time accidents and how WPD copes when staff get tired. AS confirmed we had one non lost-time accident (the wind took a ladder from someone's hand) and one near miss (when a tree down on a vehicle). No-one was hurt. We prepare as best we can and people work in shifts and are stood down accordingly.</p> <p>JG offered Cadent's help with any analysis or lessons learned. AS mentioned the national work and local resilience work that is ongoing. It would be good to keep working on the one stop PSR and improving resilience comms at an industry level.</p> <p>CT was pleased to see WPD is never complacent, always improving and helped other areas, noting phenomenal endeavours from the field – indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>GM asked about numbers of customers restored in 48 hours. The group talked about the longest duration of supply and how this was down to the severity of damage.</p> <p>GM wondered if there was any impact and learning from other utilities. AS noted this was the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> storms this year. Arwen meant an Ofgem investigation around whether licences have been met and a BEIS investigation to ensure the network is fit for the future. Areas of joint learning were around prompt payment of GS payments, communication and resilience of the telecoms infrastructure. AS asked about rural areas losing phone service going digital and AS confirmed we are working as an industry and attend a working group with respect to 2025 resilience.</p>
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## Connections Update

<b>Discussion</b>	<p>KJ talked to the group about connections, covering an EV update, news about WPD's new trigger point offers and flexible connections. Members discussed the whole systems approach and KJ talked about multi-utility perspectives. AS noted we also build annual DFES forecasts detailing our best scenario of the future and this includes other local authorities, battery storage and the whole system.</p> <p>GM asked about the changes for EHV reinforcement trigger points and how they have been received by customers. KJ said they are well received - customers like having options and there has already been uptake of the further capacity offered. ASp was pleased to see the trigger point conversation improving the service and potential costs for customers.</p> <p>RH asked about Community Energy engineers and KJ offered to put RH in touch with one of our CE engineers. JK asked if we have Active Network Management (ANM) areas and KJ confirmed we have and will implement them more in the future.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. RH to be put in touch with Faithful Chanda – NJ to arrange.</li><li>2. Panel asked to send any suggestions for further improvement to KJ</li><li>3. KJ to return to the Panel in September and cover:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access SCR – an update following Ofgem's final determination and discussion with the panel about how we communicate the changes.</li><li>• EHV trigger points – an update following the review that WPD will undertake June/July time which will be six months from EHV trigger point implementation.</li></ul></li></ol>

## An update from the Chair – recent EV surgery and Community Matters subgroup

<b>Discussion</b>	<p>GM updated the group on the EV surgery recently attended by interested members. BR noted that in the event of an outage V2G would be difficult as overhead lines may need repair and couldn't be live at the time. The group discussed vehicle to grid options and costs and the standards and methods in place. WB noted wider transport policy and car sharing schemes also need to be taken into account. AS noted that policy/drivers and engagement with stakeholders can give WPD volumes but behaviours still need predicting.</p> <p>GM also updated the group on the Community Matters subgroup. CT supported the fund coming from shareholders and endorsed the work WPD does to support those writing applications (who may not be confident/skilled in the process). The group talked about other organisations and how WPD can reach them.</p> <p>WB talked about the fuel price crisis and RA explained what our fuel poverty partners were doing in this area. JK mentioned local area energy plans in Wales and CT mentioned the holiday hunger schemes previously held in Birmingham. AS noted WPD's portion of a customer's bill is about £98 a year and we plan to keep this broadly flat in ED2.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Members to respond to GM or NJ separately to answer the questions covered in the slides re Equal EV (slides will be on Trello).</li><li>5. Members to respond directly to WPD if they have any suggestions on areas further ideas about Community Matters funding.</li><li>6. NJ to share suggestions about parish councils or local churches, NALC (National Association of Local Councils with Mike Clarke.</li></ol>